

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 071893 TOSEC 030197

NO. 18 FOR CARTER FROM PA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT WALL STREET JOURNAL ARTICLE BY
ROBERT KEATLEY FRIDAY APRIL 1 HEADED "U.S. ATTEMPTS TO
MINIMIZE SALT SETBACK AS SOVIETS ASSAIL 'ONE-SIDED PRO-
POSALS'."

2. AMERICAN OFFICIALS TRIED YESTERDAY TO ACCENTUATE THE
POSITIVE ABOUT THE BREAKDOWN OF ARMS-CONTROL TALKS BUT
THEY GOT LITTLE COOPERATION FROM THE RUSSIANS.

3. INSTEAD, SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREI GROMYKO --
IN PERHAPS HIS FIRST NEWS CONFERENCE EVER WITH WESTERN
JOURNALISTS -- BLAMED THE COLLAPSE ON WHAT HE CALLED
"ONE-SIDED" U.S. PROPOSALS.

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4. "I WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT U.S. LEADERS
WILL STAND ON A MORE REALISTIC POSITION, TAKING SOVIET
SECURITY INTO CONSIDERATION, AND NOT TRY SO MUCH TO
ACHIEVE ONE-SIDED PRIVILEGES," MR. GROMYKO SAID IN
MOSCOW.

5. HE ALSO SAID THE RUSSIANS WILL REOPEN AN OLD ARMS-

CONTROL ISSUE, AMERICAN BASES IN EUROPE, WHICH PREVIOUSLY HAD BEEN DROPPED FROM THE STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATION TALKS BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT. IF THIS IS A SERIOUS MOVE, RATHER THAN JUST A BARGAINING TACTIC, IT WOULD MARK A MAJOR STEP BACKWARD IN THE SEARCH FOR A NEW SALT TREATY.

6. ALL THIS CONTRASTED SHARPLY WITH THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN REACTION YESTERDAY. SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE, CURRENTLY TOURING THREE WESTERN EUROPEAN CAPITALS, REFUSED TO SEE JOURNALISTS TRAVELING WITH HIM. BUT HE HAD TWO AIDES GIVE REPORTERS AN UPBEAT INTERPRETATION OF WHAT HAPPENED IN MOSCOW, WHERE RUSSIAN LEADERS REJECTED TWO AMERICAN SALT PROPOSALS WEDNESDAY.

7. ONE OFFICIAL STRESSED TO REPORTERS ON THE TRIP THAT MR. VANCE AND MR. GROMYKO WILL MEET AGAIN NEXT MONTH IN GENEVA TO TRY AGAIN FOR IMPORTANT SALT PROGRESS. AND HE EMPHASIZED THAT EIGHT WORKING GROUPS OF SOVIET AND AMERICAN BUREAUCRATS WILL TACKLE LESSER ARMS-CONTROL-RELATED PROBLEMS IN OTHER NEGOTIATIONS.

8. IN ADDITION, A JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED YESTERDAY SAID THE TWO SIDES HAD AGREED TO CONTINUE COOPERATION ON CERTAIN MATTERS OF CIVILIAN CONCERN. OFFICIALS SAID THESE INCLUDED EXTENSION OF SOVIET-AMERICAN AGREEMENTS ON SPACE EXPLORATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, AND HOUS-

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ING AND ENERGY.

9. AN AGREEMENT TO PERMIT EACH COUNTRY TO BUILD A NEW EMBASSY IN THE OTHER'S CAPITAL WAS ALSO SIGNED.

10. IN HIS EFFORT TO STRESS THE POSITIVE SIDE OF THE MOSCOW TALKS, THE U.S. OFFICIAL SAID SOVIET LEADER LEONID BREZHNEV WAS ALWAYS CORDIAL IN HIS MEETING WITH MR. VANCE AND TOLD THE U.S. SECRETARY THAT RUSSIA WANTS A NEW SALT AGREEMENT BEFORE OCTOBER -- WHEN EXISTING CONTROLS ON OFFENSIVE STRATEGIC WEAPONS EXPIRE. THE OFFICIAL SAID THE HUMAN-RIGHTS ISSUE WAS RAISED ONLY PERIPHERALLY AND DIDN'T SEEM TO AFFECT THE ARMS NEGOTIATIONS.

22. FINALLY, ANOTHER U.S. OFFICIAL -- WHO IN FACT WASN'T PRESENT DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS -- WAS AUTHORIZED TO TELL REPORTERS THAT MR. BREZHNEV WAS IN FACT "AFFABLE." THE TRAVELING JOURNALISTS SAID THEY FOUND

THIS LAUGHABLE.

12. BUT SALT NEGOTIATIONS HAVEN'T YET FAILED DESPITE THEIR MAJOR SETBACK IN MOSCOW THIS WEEK. THE TWO U.S. PROPOSALS THAT THE RUSSIANS REJECTED REMAIN A BASIS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION, THOUGH THERE ISN'T ANY CERTAINTY THAT MOSCOW WILL RECONSIDER ITS POSITION. A NEW OUT-LINE FOR FURTHER TALKS COULD EMERGE IN GENEVA, HOWEVER, LEADING TO ANOTHER SALT TREATY LATER THIS YEAR.

13. HOWEVER, MR. GROMYKO IN HIS TELEVISED NEWS CONFERENCE -- AN UNUSUAL EVENT FOR THE SOVIET UNION -- SOUNDED RATHER NEGATIVE YESTERDAY. ALTHOUGH HE TOO INSISTED "WE MUST DO EVERYTHING TO LIMIT WEAPONS AND REACH AN AGREEMENT," HE HAD NOTHING GOOD TO SAY ABOUT WHAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION PROPOSED.

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14. "THE VERSION WIDELY CIRCULATED IN THE WEST THESE DAYS, ALLEGING THAT THE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE PROPOSED A BROAD DISARMAMENT PROGRAM WHILE THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP FAILED TO ACCEPT THIS PROGRAM, IS BASICALLY FALSE," THE GENERALLY DOUR FOREIGN SECRETARY SAID. "NOBODY PROPOSED SUCH A PROGRAM TO US."

15. THE NEWS CONFERENCE APPARENTLY REFLECTS A DEFENSIVE ATTITUDE IN THE KREMLIN. MR. CARTER'S PROPOSALS, AS DESCRIBED BY THE PRESIDENT EARLIER, DO SEEM TO OFFER THE CHANCE FOR SWEEPING ARMS REDUCTIONS RATHER THAN MERELY SLOWING DOWN THE ARMS BUILDUP; MR. CARTER CALLED THE TERMS "RADICAL." THE SOVIET REJECTION RAISES DOUBTS ABOUT WHETHER MOSCOW SERIOUSLY WANTS MAJOR REDUCTIONS, AS RUSSAIN PROPAGANDA HAS LONG CLAIMED.

16. THUS MR. GROMYKO TRIED HARD TO BLAME THE PROBLEM ON THE AMERICANS. HE CONTENDED THE U.S. HAD RENEGED ON AN EARLIER PROMISE, ALLEGEDLY GIVEN IN VLADIVOSTOK IN LATE 1974, TO INCLUDE THE CRUISE MISSILE UNDER TERMS AGREED TO THEN. THIS IS WHAT MADE THE AMERICAN FALL-BACK POSITION "ONE-SIDED," IN HIS VIEW. MEANTIME, THE SWEEPING CUTS PROPOSED IN THE MAIN U.S. BARGAINING POSITION ALSO GAVE THE AMERICAN SIDE SPECIAL ADVANTAGES, ACCORDING TO MR. GROMYKO.

17. BUT IN DESCRIBING THE CHIEF AMERICAN PLAN, THE SOVIET FOREIGN SECRETARY SEEMED TO CONFIRM THAT IT IS IN FACT A "BROAD DISARMAMENT PROGRAM" -- DESPITE THE CLAIM TO THE CONTRARY.

18. THE VLADIVOSTOK TERMS, WHICH MR. CARTER CALLS INADEQUATE, PERMIT EACH SIDE TO HAVE 2,400 LONG-RANGE

BOMBERS AND MISSILES, OF WHICH 1,320 CAN CARRY MULTIPLE WARHEADS, OR MIRVS. MR. GROMYKO SAID THE U.S. PROPOSED UNCLASSIFIED

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CUTTING THESE LIMITS TO 1,800 TO 2,000 "DELIVERY SYSTEMS" OF WHICH 1,100 TO 1,200 COULD HAVE MIRVS.

19. IN LONDON, WHERE HE SPENT LAST NIGHT, SECRETARY VANCE DECLINED TO COMMENT ON THE GROMYKO STATEMENTS, AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS WOULDN'T CONFIRM THE FIGURES USED BY MR. GROMYKO.

20. U.S. OFFICIALS DID DENY SOME SOVIET ALLEGATIONS, HOWEVER. PRESIDENT CARTER SAID WEDNESDAY THAT LIMITS ON CRUISE MISSILES WEREN'T INCLUDED IN THE VLADIVOSTOK AGREEMENT, DESPITE RUSSIAN CLAIMS. AND WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JODY POWELL YESTERDAY REPEATED THE PRESIDENT'S BELIEF THAT THE TERMS OFFERED WERE "EXTREMELY FAIR AND EQUITABLE." HE ADDED THAT "SO FAR AS I KNOW THERE ARE NO PLANS TO REVISE" THEM FOR THE GENEVA MEETING IN MAY.

21. IT'S POSSIBLE THAT, GIVEN MORE TIME, RUSSIAN LEADERS WILL RECONSIDER THE PROPOSALS AND FIND AT LEAST SOME CLAUSES ACCEPTABLE. HOWEVER, MR. GROMYKO DIDN'T OFFER MUCH REASON FOR OPTIMISM.

22. "SOVIET LEADERS HAVE A LOT OF TOLERANCE, AND THE TOLERANCE ISN'T EXHAUSTED YET," HE SAID. BUT, HE WARNED, "CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCES NOW EXIST IN THE POLICIES OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE U.S.S.R. AND THEY AREN'T GOING TO DECREASE."

23. HE CONCEDED THAT THE QUESTION OF AMERICAN BASES IN EUROPE AND THE STATIONING OF U.S. SHIPS AND SUBMARINES NEAR THE RUSSIAN COAST HAD BEEN DROPPED DURING THE 1974 VLADIVOSTOK MEETING OF MR. BREZHNEV AND PRESIDENT FORD. "NOW WE HAVE A DIFFERENT ARGUMENT," HE SAID. "IN THE LIGHT OF THE LATEST AMERICAN PROPOSALS, WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO REOPEN THE QUESTION OF POSITIONING OF SUB- UNCLASSIFIED

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MARINES AND BOMBERS" THAT CARRY NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IF

THIS MATTER IS RAISED AGAIN, IT COULD FORCE THE TWO SIDES TO START OVER AGAIN, ABANDONING MOST TENTATIVE SALT AGREEMENTS REACHED SINCE THE INITIAL TREATY IN 1972.

24. THE SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER ALSO OBJECTED TO U.S. TERMS THAT WOULD PUT SHARP RESTRICTIONS ON DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WEAPONS. HE CALLED THEM "UNREAL" AND CLAIMED THEY WOULD GIVE THE AMERICANS MILITARY ADVANTAGES. HE

CLAIMED WASHINGTON WANTS HALF THE SOVIET ROCKETS DESTROYED ON GROUNDS THAT "THE U.S. DIDN'T LIKE THEM" BECAUSE THEY ARE "TOO HEAVY" OR "TOO EFFECTIVE." PLACING LIMITS ON THE NUMBERS OF THE BIGGEST RUSSIAN MISSILES, WHICH ARE MUCH LARGER THAN ANY U.S. MODELS, IS ONE U.S. SALT OBJECTIVE.

25. MR. GROMYKO REPEATED THAT CONTROLS SHOULDN'T BE PLACED ON THE RUSSIAN BACKFIRE BOMBER BECAUSE IT ISN'T A LONG-RANGE, OR STRATEGIC, WEAPON. THE U.S. DISAGREES.

26. THE FOREIGN MINISTER AGREED WITH U.S. OFFICIALS THAT HUMAN-RIGHTS DISPUTES DIDN'T BLOCK SALT PROGRESS. BUT HE CLAIMED PRESIDENT CARTER'S STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR SOVIET DISSIDENTS DID HAVE AN INDIRECT EFFECT.

27. RISING TO HIS FEET FOR EMPHASIS, MR. GROMYKO SAID "THE FACT IS THAT EVERYTHING SAID ABOUT RIGHTS BY THE U.S. ... WORSENS THE ATMOSPHERE, HURTS THE POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE FOR DISCUSSION OF OTHER ISSUES, INCLUDING ARMS LIMITATION." END TEXT.
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